TBI Television Business International Buyer's Guide

From set... to screen

Uncover the most hotly anticipated shows available for acquisition

TBI Buyer's Guide April 2022

Editor's note

Welcome to the latest edition of the TBI Buyer's Guide, which is again jam-packed with shows from across the content spectrum that will get viewers of all ages informed, engaged and entertained.

From scripted hits such as *Soldiers* and *Soko Linz*, to factual shows including *Voices of Liberatio*n, this MIPTV special edition features some of the best programming to have emerged from the world's finest creative forces and production powerhouses.

We have again collated all your need-to-know information in one place, so you can easily find out who made the show and who sells it. Each programme is given a full page that allows you to fully delve into its premise, explore its look and feel, and to find out more about the creators behind it. You can also check out the key artwork and be sure to make the most of the links that take you straight to where the action is - with clips that provide you with an instant taster of what's on offer.

On top of all that, we've included a selection of TBI's Showrunner Insight interviews, which get under the skin of some of the best creatives in the business to find out what makes them tick.

We hear from talent including Peter Blake, the creator & showrunner of Amazon's Mexico City-shot drama *El Candidato*, and John Wirth, the man behind Netflix drama *Wu Assassins*, discusses his thoughts on the early end to *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*.

Also featured is Alankrita Shrivastava, the writer, director & showrunner for Netflix's *Bombay Begums*, while Sudip Sharma, creator of Amazon's crime drama *Paatal Lok*, discusses how *Rectify* stuck its landing. Enjoy!

Contents

3. Scripted listings
Check out the latest scripted series from around the world

6. Showrunners Insight:
The Good Doctor's Peter Blake

10. Showrunners Insight:
Wu Assassins' John Wirth

15. Showrunners Insight:
Bombay Begums' Alankrita Shrivastava

18. Showrunners Insight:
Paatal Lok's Sudip Sharma

19. Unscripted listings
From the most eye-opening docs to the very best factual entertainment

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Printed in England by Walstead Roche Ltd, St Austell, Cornwall PL26 8LX.

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Television Business International (USPS 003-807) is published bi-monthly (Jan, Mar, Apr, Jun, Aug and Oct) by Informa Tech, 240 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8BF. The 2006 US Institutional subscription price is $255. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by Agent named Air Business, C/O Priority Airfreight NY Ltd, 147-29 182nd Street, Jamaica, NY11413. Periodical postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. US Postmaster: Send address changes to Television Business International, C/O Air Business Ltd / Priority Airfreight NY Ltd, 147-29 182nd Street, Jamaica, NY11413. Subscription records are maintained at Informa Tech, 240 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8BF, United Kingdom. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

Badass Class

Croatia is calling! The 12th grade of a Berlin high school is going on a graduation trip. Together with stressed-out teacher Ms. Gruber and over-committed teacher Georg, the trip doesn't start off as planned: In the so-called Eco-Hostel – no electricity after 6 p.m., gender-neutral toilets and only one (!) power outlet per room – the dream of an Insta-worthy beach vacation with endless parties seems to burst before it has even begun. McLarry in particular had high hopes of distraction: he's the only one who didn't pass his exams and who can't actually afford the class trip. He is also not yet over his breakup with Bella. But then there is a ray of hope – his favorite rapper and idol Zeno is also in Croatia! The perfect opportunity for McLarry to present his own songs to him. Together with his best buddy Cornelius and the two best friends Bella and Alena, they break away from the class excursion and head to Zeno's villa. With the hopelessly overtaxed chaperone Georg in tow, they embark on the gnarliest adventure of their lives... **TBI**

Logline: True friends, pure love and absolute chaos – the 12th grade of a Berlin high school goes on a wild graduation trip to Croatia.
Genre: Comedy, Scripted Reality Satire
Duration: 97'

View trailer

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Between Two Worlds

The large-scale US military presence in West Germany in the early 50s is opening up a 'new world', paving the way for a new era of individual freedom, permissiveness and capitalism. This development in the fictitious town of Kaltenstein is the setting for *Between Two Worlds*, the powerful story of friendship between two women who both strive to create lives for themselves during a time of great change, coming into conflict with the old order: the conservative forces of politics, the Church and society. Confronted with the temptations of the new world, the two unalike women develop in opposing directions, putting their friendship to the test. Marie is a farmer's daughter in the small town. The down-to-earth, dutiful young woman must assume responsibility for the farm and family after the Americans expropriate the Kastners' land and her father falls into melancholy.

Erika is the daughter of the mayor of Kaltenstein. She's an extroverted woman with a zest for life who sees the presence of the Americans as a blessing. While her best friend Erika welcomes the new world with open arms and enjoys the easy life with the Americans, Marie awaits the return of her fiancé (and Erika's brother) Siegfried, lost in Russia. Gradually, she allows herself to be drawn into the maelstrom of freedom. Marie begins to work in the Colonel's household, becomes enthusiastic about art and literature – and falls in love with George, an American GI. Erika no longer seems to believe in her brother's return. Her brazen behaviour provokes her parents, who threaten to send her to a convent. Generations and tempers collide.

Produced by FFP New Media GmbH in co-production with SWR, ARD Degeto, NDR and WDR.

Genre: Drama
Episodes: 3x90' or 6x45'
Key sales contact:
Sebastian Krekeler, Director Drama, ZDF Studios

View trailer

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Endless Night

A fascinating fantasy thriller for Netflix.

By the director of *Our Heroes Died Tonight*, David Perrault

Eva, a reclusive seventeen-year-old, meets a group of teenagers who enjoy recreationally using Icelotropine, a medication stolen from a sleep-clinic, in an attempt to cope with the pain of their tedious lives. The drug's psychotropic effects allow them to freely navigate between their dreams and reality. Eva is introduced to the group by Sebastien, but as the story unfolds, their escapist dreams become infectious nightmares as the line between their sleep states and reality quickly starts to blur. Sebastien finds himself trapped inside a hellish maze-like nightmare to which only Eva seems to have the key. In the tradition of grand hallucinations, *Endless Night* is a fantastic thriller that zooms in on teenage angst with a unique twist that takes the viewer on a thrilling adventure between fantasy and reality. **TBI**

Genre: Fantastic Thriller for Y.A
Format: 6x45'
Written by David Perrault, Emmanuel Voisin, Julie Anna Grignon et Sophie Dab
Directed by David Perrault
Produced by Federation Entertainment Belgique, Empreinte Digitale, Versus, Proximus
Broadcaster/Platforms: Netflix
Cast: Ayumi Roux, Hanane El Yousfi, Salif Cisse, Chine Thybaud, Louïs Rault Watanabe, Léo Legrand, Théo Augier
Language: French
Year of production: 2021-22
International Sales: Federation Entertainment

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Showrunners Insight: Peter Blake

Peter Blake, the Emmy-nominated writer, producer and showrunner, who has most recently served as an executive producer on ABC's medical drama *The Good Doctor*, reflects on the collapse of the old network model and shares his love of *Breaking Bad*

New York-based Blake also wrote for *House, M.D.* for eight seasons, as well as for series including *The Practice*, *Elementary*, *Gotham* and *Billions*, among other shows. He is the creator and showrunner of *El Candidato*, a Mexican political thriller set and filmed in Mexico City that premiered on Amazon Prime Video in July 2020s.

In two sentences, tell us how you became a showrunner, writer/producer and why.
I had been writing and producing for years, and had gotten one pilot made, when I was approached by some producers who wanted to make a political thriller series set in Mexico City. It sounded fun and challenging, and it was.

What's the hardest part of your job?
Finding a balance between making a solid show and having a life outside work.

El Candidato

What's the best part of being a showrunner, writer/producer?
Seeing a talented crew and a talented cast bring your ideas to life.

What single action most helped you to become a showrunner, writer/producer?
There wasn't one – it was a process of slowly gaining knowledge via writing and producing on other people's shows.

What is the biggest single challenge facing the industry?
The collapse of the old network model without the creation (yet) of a new model that is fair to the majority of writers.

How can the industry improve diversity off-screen?
By cementing the realization that increased diversity has already led to better TV.

Breaking Bad

Name your favourite show of your lifetime?
Breaking Bad.

Best show to be cancelled too soon?
I'll stretch the meaning of "cancelled," but… *Breaking Bad*.

Which show nailed its finale and why?
This is getting repetitious but… *Breaking Bad* (and *The Shield*, *M*A*S*H*, *Cheers*…)

What has been your proudest moment in the industry?
It's all a blur. A long, beautiful blur. **TBI**

Good People

In competition at Series Mania 2022 / International Panorama

A story about good people doing bad things despite their best intentions by the creators of international hit series *The Break*.

Good People brilliantly blends the slapstick humor and thriller genres through a unique visual style to tell a story about good people doing bad things despite their best intentions.

Tom and Linda are thirtysomethings living in Belgium, along the French border. He is a policeman, she is a beautician, and they are on the verge of bankruptcy. Caught between a rock and a hard place, they embark on a get-rich-quick life insurance scam in an attempt to give themselves a fresh start someplace sunny. Their plan is going pretty well... until everything goes wrong, when Philippe, a French gendarme with whom Linda has an affair starts to investigate… Joining those characters on their misadventures is Serge, Linda's out-of-control ex-con cousin, Stéphane, a cop who is waiting for the case that will help his career finally take off, Cathy, an insurance broker who wants to investigate no matter what, Corinne, Tom's very pious and very cumbersome sister.

Good People also tells the story of a small border town between France and Belgium and its people who can't seem to face the evil eating away at their community. **TBI**

Genre: Comedy Drama, Crime
Format: 6x52'
Created and directed by Stéphane Bergmans, Benjamin d'Aoust, Matthieu Donck
Produced by Hélicotronc and Unité
Broadcaster/Platforms: RTBF, ARTE
Cast: Lucas Meister, Bérangère McNeese, Peter Van den Begin, India Hair, Gwen Berrou, Lucile Vignolles, Dominique Pinon, Coralie Russier, François Damiens, Corinne Masiero
Language: French
Year of production: 2021-2022
International Sales: Federation Entertainment

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Hacked

Popular, witty, and possessing precisely the right dose of hipsterness… Nilou, Malick and Adanne are the three people everyone at school knows. But fame always has a flipside. Lots of girls not only admire Nilou's charms, they also envy her; Malick doesn't just keep the mood up, he also causes unwelcome upheaval; and Adanne – always striving to be the best – isn't always on the level when it comes to getting what she wants. Although they are best friends, and seem to share everything with each other, their secrets run deeper than the internet itself. Ironically, these youngsters are more trusting of their phones – repositories of all their personal data – than of their friends. However, when they discover their phones have been hacked, everything is thrown into disarray. Desperate to prevent their secrets being exposed, they find themselves at the mercy of a hacker who makes increasingly challenging demands in return for their privacy, confronting the three friends with their deepest fears and darkest secrets.

Hacked is directed by Laura van Haecke, who won the 2021 Palm Springs International Award for her short film *Howling*.

Hacked is selected for the Short Form Competition at CanneSeries 2022. **TBI**

View trailer

Production Company: Dingie
Broadcaster: Streamz & GoPlay
Genre: Drama
Length & Episodes: 10x14'
Logline: When their phones get hacked, three teenagers find themselves at the mercy of a stalker who makes increasingly challenging demands in return for their privacy, confronting the friends with their deepest fears and darkest secrets.
Website: https://www.dfw-international.com/hacked-series

DFW International

Web: www.dfw-international.com
Contact: Charlotte Henskens, Director International Sales

Herzogpark

Hannah, Elisabeth and Annabelle: they're beautiful, they're rich and they want to stay where they are at all costs: in Munich's highly exclusive residential area of Herzogpark. There's only one problem and it's male, powerful and has all three of them in its grip: the construction mogul Nikolaus van der Bruck. The women decide that they have to get rid of van der Bruck. But how? Poison him, run him over, shoot him or suffocate him during sex? It's not that easy to get rid of someone with an element of elegance and discretion. Especially not in a world like Herzogpark where everyone is watching everyone else and at the same time trying to keep up the nice facade...

And then suddenly an obscure outsider appears on the screen and seems to be pursuing her own agenda. A woman unlike any of the three Herzogpark ladies. A woman who has nothing to lose. Maria has already had everything taken from her, by Nikolaus. **TBI**

Logline: The perfectly polished existence of a glamorous, champagne-fueled world is on the brink of chaos as carefully hidden secrets threaten to surface.
Genre: Social Comedy, Drama, Thriller
Duration: 6x60'

View trailer

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Showrunners Insight: John Wirth

John Wirth, the creator of Netflix supernatural action series *Wu Assassins*, reveals how he worked his way up the ranks, and laments the early end to *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*

Wirth has also served as an executive producer/showrunner on series including *Hap And Leonard* for SundanceTV, *Hell On Wheels* for AMC, *The Cape* for NBC and *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* for FOX, as well as the CBS shows *Love Monkey*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *The District* and *Nash Bridges*.

In two sentences, tell us how you became a showrunner, writer/producer and why.
I spent 16 years working my way up from freelancer to executive producer, and in 2000 I was asked to take over and fix *The District*, a show in trouble. My reputation as a "fixer" has followed me since.

What's the hardest part of your job?
The stress of not having enough time, enough money, or enough of the right people to make the show you see in your mind's eye. Also, managing up is getting more complicated by the day.

What's the best part of being a showrunner, writer/producer?
Control, baby.

What single action most helped you to become a showrunner, writer/producer?
Working as a number two on a successful series for multiple seasons and being conveniently "available" when The District job came up.

What is the biggest single challenge facing the industry?
There are many, just ask any member of any crew, above or below the line, in front of or behind the camera. Everyone has their own issues specific to their department and discipline. For writers, I'd like everyone to be eligible to write everything. Sadly, there's a lot of "silo-ing" going on right now.

How can the industry improve diversity off-screen?
In the television business, showrunners are responsible for diversity on their shows. Companies can mandate, but unless the person making hiring decisions on a show is committed to diversity, there will always be a reason why it can't be accomplished. This is the easy answer. The harder answer requires we dig into the "reasons" why it's been hard historically to find qualified diverse hires for certain departments. And that has to do with access, or the lack thereof.

Wu Assassins

Name the favourite show of your lifetime?
I loved *Wild, Wild West* as a kid. I probably couldn't do better than boil it down to my top ten favorites as an adult. *Breaking Bad* would be one of them. So would *Happy Valley*, *Anne With An E* and *The Sopranos*.

Best show to be cancelled too soon?
I'll tell you the best show I worked on that got cancelled way before its time: *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*. That show could've run another four years easily, but then it may have outlasted the very executives who cancelled it.

Which show nailed its finale and why?
The Sopranos finale was beautiful. The ending unexpected, fresh and different. It fooled me, and I expect it fooled a lot of people. I still argue with friends about what it meant. David Chase is pretty good, yeah?

What has been your proudest moment in the industry?
I have played a role in launching a lot of writers on their careers. Many of them have gone on to be vastly more successful than me. I've been asked on more than one occasion if that makes me mad, or jealous. My answer is: every father wants to see his children do better than him. I couldn't be happier for the writers who I had a chance to work with early in their careers, and with whom I could share a few of the things I learned the "hardest" way so they might not have to. When they have a win I feel good. **TBI**

JGA: Jasmin. Gina. Anna

As the maid of honour for her best friend, Jasmin has to plan a surprise hen night for the bride. But when all of their mum friends start cancelling, using their sick kids as excuses, and even the bride herself drops out because she is pregnant, the three left-over single ladies are dumped with their Ibiza plans and tickets. Drunk and frenetic, they decide to stick with the hen party plan – without the hen. But upon arriving on Ibiza, they run into Jasmin's ex-boyfriend, the one that got away. He will be getting married shortly – and is celebrating his own stag party on the island. Not wanting to lose face, Jasmin announces that she's the hen of their party, getting married too – and lays the first brick of a large temple of lies. **TBI**

View trailer

Logline: A story of friendship and saying goodbye to single life, full of humor and with great dialog wit. What if everyone around you is getting married and diving into a new phase of life, but you're only allowed to watch from the sidelines?
Genre: Comedy
Duration: 118'

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Soko Linz

Welcome to the series premiere of *Soko Linz*! The Special Commission is run as a police cooperation center, deployed in the border triangle of Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic, and also counts on the friendly Austro-German relationship in terms of personnel. In 13 cross-border cases, resolute Chief Inspector Johanna "Joe" Haizinger and the considerate Chief Commissioner Ben Halberg investigate everything, from Linz's up-and-coming technology sector to the homeless scene, between witness protection programs and the hunt for serial killers. The duo is supported by their young boss, Chief Commissioner Nele Oldendorf and forensic pathologist Richard "Richie" Vitek, who is repeatedly required to take on the role of the unwilling therapist whenever there's tension within the team. Aleks Malenov is their cheerful assistant and the good soul of the Soko team, while Yara Nejem, the facility manager, is the secret boss of the station house. Together, the Soko team refuses to be deterred by any adversity and solves every crime with a good portion of skill and charm. **TBI**

Episodes: 13×45'
Genre: Crime-Series
Produced by Gebhardt Productions for ORF and ZDF

View trailer

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Soldiers

In selection at Series Mania 2022/International competition

By the team behind *A French Village*, *Totems*, *SKAM* and *Paris Police 1900*

Soldiers is a portrait of young soldiers searching for meaning in life as they fight against the Islamic State, far from home. The series focuses on the 'Operation Barkhane' mission in Mali, an anti-insurgent operation that has recently been making headlines in international news after France announced its withdrawal from the region after a nine-year battle in mid-February 2022.

In the Mopti region of Mali, Lieutenant Anais Collet's division, deployed as part of Operation Barkhane, is dedicated to tracking down terrorists. Soon, however, an ambush with dramatic consequences rekindles tensions between the military and the Malian people, who are less and less accepting of the French presence in their village. In a country where armed terrorist groups are proliferating, the French army assembles a complex new division whose mission is to stop a caliphate from being declared in the Sahel. Who are these young soldiers serving under the French flag, thousands of miles from home, who risk their lives to protect others? **TBI**

Genre: Drama
Format: 7x52'
Written by Thibault Valetoux (*Paris Police 1900*) & Frédéric Krivine (*A French Village*)
Directed by Jean Philippe Amar (*A French Village*, *Spiral*)
Produced by Orange Studios and Tetra Media
Original broadcaster: OCS
Cast: Pauline Parigot, Louis Peres, Birane Ba de la Comédie Française, Yannick Choirat, Samir Seghir, Vanessa Fonte, Raphaëlle Rousseau, Jonathan Turnbull, Antoine Pelletier, Warren Ferri.
Language: French
Year of production: 2022
International Sales: Federation Entertainment

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The Lesson

In competition at Canneseries 2022

A political discussion between Amir, a 43-year-old teacher, and Lian, a 17-year-old student explodes into an emotional conflict that extends far outside of the classroom. In a fight over justice, both Amir and Lian refuse to give in even when things spin out of control and take a devastating toll that will change their lives forever. The six episodes follow the ripple effect of their disagreement from the classroom to the entire school, then throughout the community, to the media, and into the explosive political reality Israel is facing today. As the fight escalates, the series dives deep under the surface to unveil the bleeding wounds in the hearts of both protagonists. **TBI**

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Genre: Drama
Format: 6x40'
Written by Deakla Keydar
Directed by Eitan Zur
Produced by Jasmine TV
Broadcaster/Platforms: Kan 11 (Israeli Public Broadcast)
Cast: Doron Ben-David, Maya Landsmann
Language: Hebrew
Year of production: 2021
International Sales: Federation Entertainment

Showrunners Insight: Alankrita Shrivastava

Alankrita Shrivastava, the writer, director, and showrunner for Netflix's *Bombay Begums*, reveals how she made the move from feature films to TV series, shares her thoughts on what it takes to improve industry diversity, and explains why UK comedy-drama *After Life* has such a great finale

Shrivastava also co-wrote the first season and directed episodes of Amazon Prime Video's *Made In Heaven* and has written and directed feature films such as *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare* and *Lipstick Under My Burkha*.

She is currently working with Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti on the second season of *Made in Heaven*.

In two sentences, tell us how you became a showrunner/producer and why?
I created a bible for *Bombay Begums* – a show that was developed in association with Chernin Entertainment and eventually greenlit for production by Netflix India. As the creator of the show, and given my experience with writing, direction, and production, it just felt like the right time and project for me to transition to the role of showrunner.

What's the hardest part of your job?
I think the hardest part of my job was to strike the right balance between staying true to the vision I had for my show and the budget allocated. Reworking scripts so they fit the budget without having to make undesirable compromises, to cut down locations, and contain the number of shooting days – I found that challenging. It was also very difficult to do the post-production of the show and deliver it in the midst of the pandemic. It was a very lonely journey to finish the show.

What's the best part of being a showrunner/producer?
The fact that you get to tell your story exactly the way you want to. Telling your story in series format provides so much room for exploration – of your story, your characters. I think the kind of overarching direction you can give to the material in terms of cast, tone, vibe… I love that. It's more than just directing episodes. It's finding and infusing meaning in moments through an entire season.

Shrivastava pic: Rodin Eckenroth/Getty Images

Bombay Begums

What single action most helped you to become a showrunner/producer?
The fact that I had an original idea for a show, and I was able to write a long and detailed bible on my own. My bible was almost 70 pages with a clear outline for every episode, all characters etched out. And of course it helped that I was already writing and directing features, and I had already written and directed for another show. I think I was totally ready to showrun!

What is the biggest single challenge facing the industry?
In India, I think it's the self-censorship that has become normalized. There's a lot of self doubt – 'can we say/show this' – because there is fear of backlash.

How can the industry improve diversity off-screen?
I think more women have to be hired pro-actively for writers' rooms, as directors, as showrunners. Specifically with respect to India, to start addressing caste/religious discrimination, writers and directors from minority groups have to be hired and enabled. But it has to go beyond hiring, new talent must get the space and support to tell the stories they want to tell, the way they want to tell them, from their own authentic perspective.

Name your favourite show of your lifetime?
Mad Men. My all time favourite show. More recently it has to be *Succession*.

Best show to be cancelled too soon?
Studio 60 On The Sunset Strip. I loved that show!

Which show nailed its finale and why?
After Life had a beautiful finale. For me what is beautiful is that nothing changes, yet everything has changed. There is a feeling that Ricky's character has made peace with his wife's death, finally. But it's internal.

What has been your proudest moment in the industry?
I guess there isn't one. But the joy you feel when you see people really connecting with your material. When people feel heard and seen by watching your show or film. When they feel your work gave them courage, made them think, or cry, or feel. Especially when it changed their heart. That makes everything worth it! **TBI**

White Night

White Night is a compelling drama that follows a family struggling to cope with an imbalance of power wielded by a person who is no longer alive, interwoven with a murder mystery. Told across two parallel time frames between the 1970s and today, *White Night* is a family saga set against a backdrop of intrigue. A flashback to the 70s reveals a young Louise (Rose-Marie Perreault), who has fallen madly in love with Vincent (Antoine Pilon), a rebel and activist working alongside Bertrand (Simon Pigeon).

After having a life-changing meeting with the man who will become her mentor, Aidrian (Nico Racicot), Louise becomes a fashionable model and launches her first perfume, White Night, whose success allows her to build a business empire: Nocturne. Over the years, Louise abandons some of her political ideals and becomes Loulou (France Castel), a formidable businesswoman. But everything changes during the evening of a reception: Loulou is found dead in her garden. Was it a murder, or an accident? The death of Loulou creates a surge of shock that is felt particularly among her children: Charlotte (Valérie Blais), Marlène (Marilyse Bourke), and Lucas (Jean-Philippe Perras), whose fate will be changed forever; but also for Aidrian (Ron Lea), a father figure and faithful friend of Loulou, who is now tasked with overseeing Nocturne's interests and protecting the Hébert clan against the secrets of the past that are now resurfacing. The children will try their best to understand. Is the Hébert clan ready to accept the impossible?

Commissioned by Radio-Canada, *White Night* (Nuit Blanche) is created by Julie Hivon (*Alerte Amber, Alertes*) and directed by Sébastien Gagné (*Lacher Prise*, *Le Chalet*) with PIXCOM's Dominique Veillet (*The Wall*) as producer. Executive producers are Nicola Merola, Charles Lafortune, Sylvie Desrochers and Jacquelin Bouchard. **TBI**

Genre: Drama series
Episodes: 12x45'
Key sales contact: Mirela Nastase, Director Drama, ZDF Studios

View trailer

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Email: info@zdf-studios.com
Key company contacts: Fred Burcksen, President and CEO, ZDF Studios; Robert Franke, VP Drama, ZDF Studios; Ralf Rueckauer, VP Unscripted, ZDF Studios; Peter Lang, VP Junior, ZDF Studios

Theodosia

Genre: Childrens' live action series
Episodes: 26x26'
Key sales contact: Katharina Pietzsch, Director Junior, ZDF Studios

View trailer

The premium live action series *Theodosia* transports its audience in a universe full of magic, adventure, fantasy and mystery. It's 1905. Smart, bold, 14-year-old Theodosia Throckmorton is the daughter of two Egyptologists, excavating in the Valley of the Kings. When Theo and her younger brother, invention-mad Henry, stumble on a hidden tomb and a mysterious artefact, the Eye of Horus, Theo unlocks the power to see and perform true magic. It's the beginning of a quest for answers: Why is she the only one who can see this magic? How is she meant to use this strange new power? While Theo tries to work out what is happening to her, she finds out a secret society wants to use the Eye of Horus to take over the world. From her home in her parents' Museum of Legends and Antiquities in the heart of Edwardian London, Theo must battle with ancient forces and dark magic as she and Henry, along with their friends, street magician Will and Egyptian princess Safiya, try to survive teenage life, get through education and save the whole world!.

Theodosia is based on the highly-acclaimed books by New York Times best-selling author Robin L. LaFevers. It is shot in a cinematic style in France and Belgium, and directed by Matthias Hoene (*Cockneys vs Zombies*, *The Warriors Gate*) and other talented directors such as Alex Jacob (*Hollyoaks*, *Doctors*). The cast consists of an impressive pool of young up-and-coming actors, some of who featured in major primetime series and feature films for the likes of HBO and Universal. Executive Producers are Emmy award-winning Joe Williams (*Hank Zipzer's Christmas Catastrophe*, *Young Dracula*, *Eve*) and Leila Smith (*Find Me in Paris*, *Lockout*).

Produced by Cottonwood Media for ZDF, ZDF Enterprises, France TV, HBO, Globo and TVA/Québecor. **TBI**

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Showrunners Insight: Sudip Sharma

Sudip Sharma, the creator of Amazon Prime Video crime drama *Paatal Lok*, discusses the importance of writing to success as a showrunner, the need for new industry voices and how the *Rectify* finale stuck the landing

Sharma also wrote Abhishek Chaubey's 2019 dacoit western, *Sonchiriya* and 2016 crime drama *Udta Punjab*, as well as Navdeep Singh's thriller, *NH10*, starring Anushka Sharma.He was also the creative producer on FoxStar Studios' 2017 fantasy comedy *Phillauri* and is currently working on the second season of *Pataal Lok* (right), amongst other projects.

In two sentences, tell us how you became a showrunner/producer and why.
Historically in India, screenwriters had very little control on the execution of their work, and most of them end up becoming directors – something I wasn't too keen on. A showrunner role allows for more responsibility and control of how my creative intent ends up on screen, while allowing my writer's core to remain intact.

What's the hardest part of your job?
Balancing the creative aspect and the financial and production constraints is the most important and challenging part of the job. There's the show… and you want to make a certain way, and then there's a budget. It's a tightrope you walk every single day.

What's the best part of being a showrunner/producer?
The best part of the job is owning up to your screw ups. There's no one you can blame for things going wrong, the buck stops with you. It's scary and liberating at the same time.

What single action most helped you to become a showrunner/producer?
Funnily enough, I feel it's my single-minded focus on the craft of screenwriting that helped me become a showrunner. A lot of what a showrunner does has to do with writing, and if you understand that process and the mechanics of its execution, you're already fulfilling the most important criterion for the job.

What is the biggest single challenge facing the industry?
The Indian web and OTT space is in a nascent and boom phase right now. So much is getting made, without as much attention to quality. But what we do now is going to set benchmarks for the future. The challenge then is to really be able to deliver quality work when the eco-system does not even demand it. As artists, we really have to demand the best of ourselves.

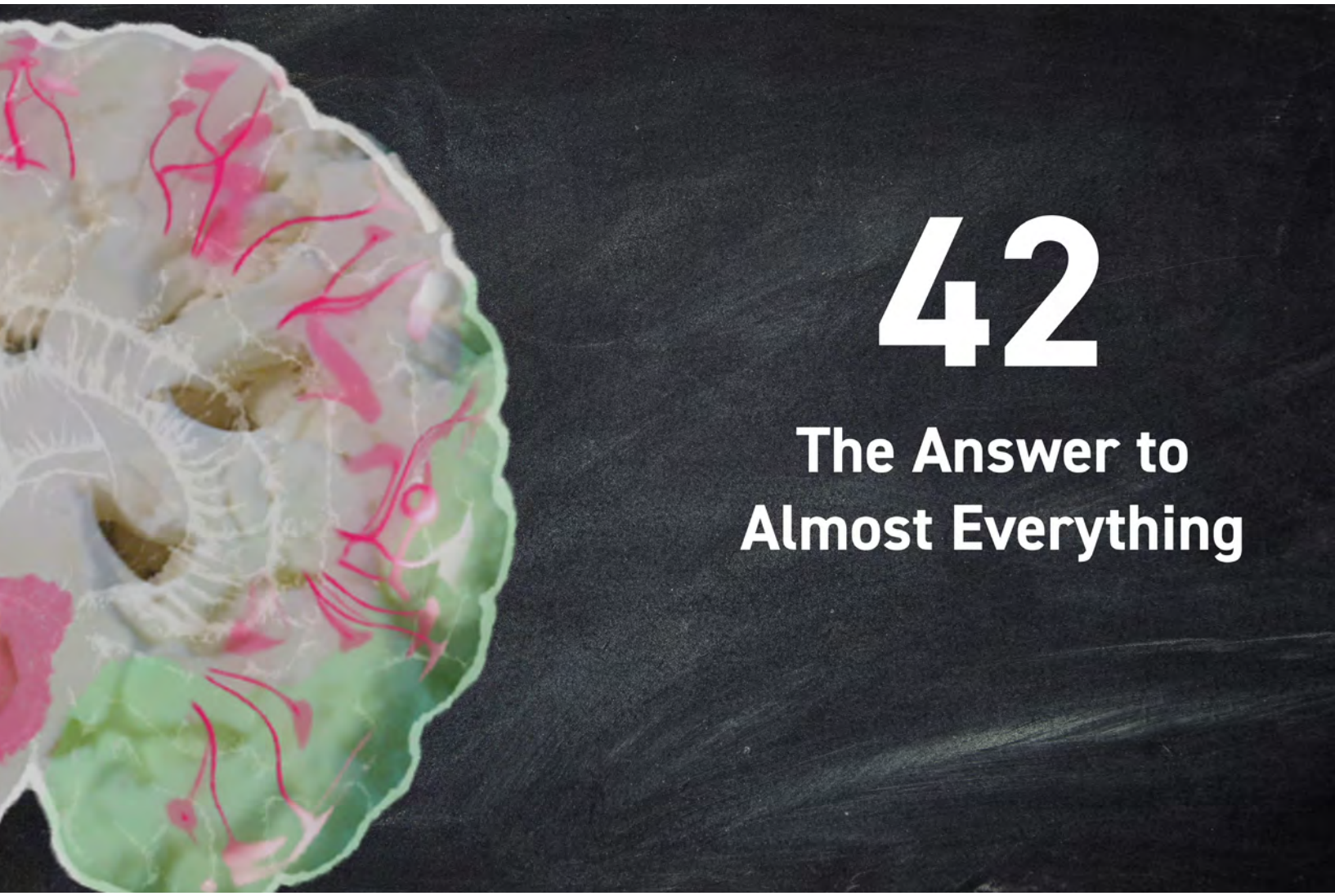
How can the industry improve diversity off-screen?
The industry and the audience here in India need an openness to newer voices and newer stories. If you want to hear the same stories, it'll be the same people telling them. Any other way to force this would be, I feel, artificial and unsustainable in the long run.

Name your favourite show of your lifetime?
My heart says *The Sopranos*, and my head says *The Wire*.

Best show to be cancelled too soon?
Deadwood. I'm glad the creators may have felt similarly and made a movie.

Which show nailed its finale and why?
A lot has been said about The Sopranos finale so I'll skip that and say *Rectify* did a fantastic job of nailing its finale. After four emotionally grueling seasons, it managed to deliver a finale that provided satisfying closure to all the prominent character arcs and relationships.

What has been your proudest moment in the industry?
I feel it's too early in my journey to look back and gloat about anything I've managed to do so far. **TBI**



42 - The Answer to Almost Everything

With a wink to Douglas Adams' cult book "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy", the show navigates through the big and small questions of mankind. Associative, original, outside the box and cleverly inspired, each topic is rolled out. Are we all hearing the same thing? Will we love robots? Should we dream more? And how does time travel work? 42 continues to ask about causes and solutions. Apparently light, but always with weight.

Topics covered: Fear, Hearing, Flying, Robot Love, Dreams, Aging, The Population of Mars, Nuclear Energy, Excrements and Urine, Hate, Time Travel, Smelling, Colours, Probabilities. **TBI**

View trailer

Production Companies: mobyDok
Broadcaster: HR
Genre: Science
Length & Episodes: 14x30'
Logline: The new and different knowledge series asks all kinds of questions and gets to the bottom of them.

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Africa From Above

Take to the skies to see *Africa from Above*, a stunning series showing a fresh perspective of the continent. Each episode takes viewers on a spectacular aerial adventure, soaring over natural wonders and diverse habitats.

From the air, we gain fresh insight into the wild animals who have adapted to flourish in sometimes inhospitable surroundings, from mountains and jungles to vast desert dunes, and on the dramatic and contrasting coastlines of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and the Mediterranean Sea.

The series also celebrates the people who live and work in various countries, from vibrant cities to deep in the African bush, and explores their history, architecture, engineering and industries — to uncover how they live in some of the most extreme environments on Earth.

In the wildlife and nature series *Africa from Above*, we fly with expert conservationists, adventurers, and extreme athletes, landing to explore the most spectacular points of interest along the way. An uplifting and visually captivating series that shows the remarkable diversity of the continent.

The episodes cover South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Morocco, Zambia, Mozambique, Cameroon and Botswana.

The series is produced by Off the Fence for ZDF Enterprises in association with ZDF, Arte, ORF and UKTV. **TBI**

Genre: Unscripted/Wildlife & Nature
Episodes: 10x50' UHD
Key sales contact: Margarita Garcia, Director Unscripted, ZDF Studios

View trailer

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Key company contacts: Fred Burcksen, President and CEO, ZDF Studios; Robert Franke, VP Drama, ZDF Studios; Ralf Rueckauer, VP Unscripted, ZDF Studios; Peter Lang, VP Junior, ZDF Studios

Voices Of Liberation

More than 75 years after the liberation of Europe, the visual documentary series *Voices Of Liberation* takes the viewer back to the largest military campaign in our history. Unique diary entries, letters and other writing from that time provide a very personal perspective.

Well-known hosts from various European countries retrace the liberation route followed by the Western Allies during WW2; from the south of England to the coast of Normandy, the Belgian Ardennes, the south-eastern provinces of the Netherlands, the German Húrtgenwald and Berlin.

At the sites of historical events such as D-Day, Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Scheldt, historical footage now comes together with unique images of nature from the present day.

The hosts include Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Christian Berkel, Sarah Kaminsky, Jennifer Teege and James Brittain-McVey. They give a voice to those directly involved, as well as share the personal tales of their (grand) parents, each of whom had a special story in WW2. **TBI**

View promo

Production Company: CZAR Film & TV
Broadcaster: Netflix & Streamz
Genre: History
Length & Episodes: 11x52'
Logline: Experience the war through the words of those who lived it.
Website: https://www.dfw-international.com/voices-of-liberation

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Web: www.dfw-international.com
Contact: Charlotte Henskens, Director International Sales

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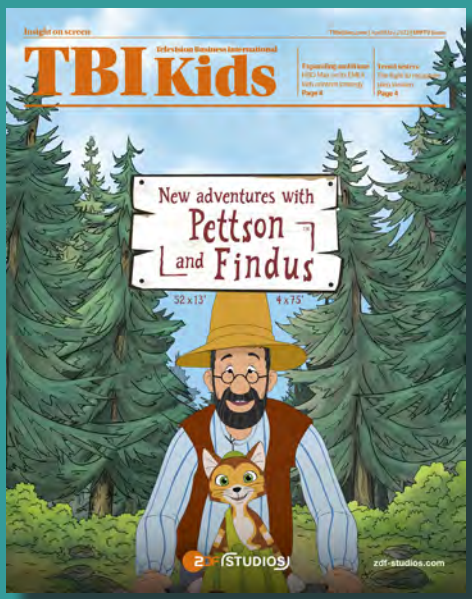

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